



## Mount Rainier Green Team Minutes

June 10, 2019 7:00-9:00 PM

City Hall

### Attendees:

- Sarah Lifsey
- Councilmember Luke Chesek
- Mimi McKindley-Ward
- Kevin McNeill

### Action Items

- The Green Team will send event information about the June 22<sup>nd</sup> Thomas Stone Pollinator Garden pollinator garden planting event to the Green Team listserv, the Stream Team, and the Community Garden list serv to solicit volunteers.
- The Green Team and the Stream Team will coordinate a date for the Stream Team Day Clean Up/Litter Trap Birthday Celebration with team members and Mt. Rainier representatives, with a tentative date in mid-to-late August. The Green Team and the Stream Team also will work together to develop a “heads up” in the Message and other social media to let people know about the No Litter Left Behind campaign.
- Kevin from the Stream Team and Councilmember Chesek are interested in coordinating on improvements to the basketball courts on Arundel. The Green Team will schedule a meeting with the new Mt. Rainier Arts Commission to discuss potential partnerships after the Commission is complete and up and running.
- Councilmember Chesek will consider reaching out to Dan Misleh, Executive Director of the Catholic Climate Covenant, to ask about potential next steps for helping St. James agree to apply for a stormwater grant and consider a conversation with the legal counsel of the Archdiocese.
- The Green Team and Compost Workgroup will continue to develop a pilot proposal with costs for Compost pick-up.
- The Green Team will follow up with PG Pool about the mosquito traps and their early results and will look into green mosquito control materials from the County and the University of MD Extension Office for dissemination in the community.
- The Green Team will continue discussing plans for a possible late summer Mt. Rainier bike ride hosted by the Bike Co-Op.
- Kevin from the Stream Team will look into securing the Community Connect meeting space at the Nature Center for a Dueling Park meeting.
- Councilmember Chesek will coordinate a Tree Commission/Green Team meeting to make a plan, potentially in August, to meet and talk about the 31st Street Pocket Park.
- For the August Message (due 7/11) Kevin will draft a short blurb for the Stream Team’s No Litter Left Behind campaign and the Green Team will write an update on the status of the city’s parks.
- Sarah will talk to Doug about promoting the #GreenIsLife videos.
- The Green Team will continue to follow the idea of revisiting backyard chicken laws in the community and discuss a community conversation for the future.
- The Green Team will follow up with Rocio and Mr. Komali to see if there could be an alternative recycling (batteries, light bulbs) drop-off point and time at Public Works.

### 1. Events

#### a. Spring Greening Fair debrief

- i. Attendance was down this year: what can we do to make next year bigger? Thoughts included teaming with the new Recreation Committee, which will have more money next year. We should also start planning earlier and consider

bringing in some new elements like bands. The PG Pool has a lot of local live musicians and would know who to contact. Another thought was to consider alcohol sales if permitted by the Nature Center. The Green Team will reach out to the Nature Center to talk about these thoughts and getting an earlier start on next year's Spring Greening Fair.

**b. Pollinator Garden for Thomas Stone Elementary (June 22<sup>nd</sup>)**

- i. Summary from email: Last spring/summer, Liz and Jerry from Brentwood worked with a teacher at Thomas Stone to install the beginnings of a pollinator garden on their grounds. They donated plants and watered the area all summer, only to find in September that the grounds people had sprayed Round UP through the entire area to kill it all off. They are now in discussions with Thomas Stone to try again and will be doing the majority of the work on June 22, in conjunction with National Pollinator Week (June 17-23). For the purposes of sustainable MD certification, they are going to install the garden under the auspices of the Brentwood Green Team, in collaboration with our Capital Area Native Plants Group (who will be donating plants), and the Prince George's Master Gardeners (who we are hoping will donate person-power for the event). Since the school is actually in Mt. Rainier, they want to know if the Mount Rainier Green Team would like to be a collaborator as well.
- ii. There was interest in helping out from the Green Team and the Stream Team, and a note that there may be interest from the Community Garden as well. *The Green Team will send event information to the Green Team listserv, the Stream Team, and the Community Garden list serv to solicit volunteers.*

**c. Stream Team No Litter Left Behind Pledge event (TBD)**

- i. The Stream Team debuted its *No Litter Left Behind Pledge* at Mt. Rainier Day with pledge boards to gather signatures and had a great response. The pledgees signed up to be notified of future litter clean up events and the Stream Team is planning on having Stream Team Day Clean Ups where attendees meet up by the litter trap to give a quick debrief on the litter trap and why its installed.
- ii. A possible date for the first Clean Up is July 28<sup>th</sup> but another thought is to hold a birthday celebration for the Stream Team and the litter trap in August. The Stream Team would like to choose a weekend where representatives from Mt. Rainier like the Mayor and Councilmembers can attend to highlight Mt. Rainier as the first municipality in Maryland to take on a litter trap.
- iii. *The Green Team and the Stream Team will coordinate a date for the Stream Team Day Clean Up/Litter Trap Birthday Celebration with team members and Mt. Rainier representatives, with a tentative date in mid-to-late August.*

**2. New Mt. Rainier Arts Commission**

- a. Mt. Rainier now has an official Arts Commission whose main task is picking a prominent place to paint a big mural, a project that will use most of their funding and time. It's not clear how many side projects they could take on but the Green Team has been interested in working with artists for environmental projects. Back in August 2018 the Green Team tried to assemble an Artist Workgroup. Thoughts for partnerships include getting Arts Commission input on painting storm trains and painting a "Welcome to Mt. Rainier" piece at the basketball courts on 30<sup>th</sup> and Arundel.
- b. There are other plans to improve the basketball courts on 30<sup>th</sup> and Arundel. *Kevin and Councilmember Chesek are interested in coordinating on improvements to the basketball courts. The Green Team will schedule a meeting with the Arts Commission to discuss potential partnerships after the Commission is complete and up and running.*

### 3. Solar Workgroup Update

- a. Mimi has been in touch with the priest at St. James and they may be interested in a sit down to talk about community solar or solar in general. There is no other update on the Solar Workgroup; one of the more active members of the workgroup has finished school and is moving away.

### 4. Stormwater Update

- a. Councilmember Cheseck talked with Father Pablo and one of the younger priests about stormwater management; the Father said that they church had received \$100k in a grant to improve façade work and the Archdiocese said no because of a clause that would've given the county inspection powers. *Councilmember Cheseck will consider reaching out to Dan Misleh, Executive Director of the Catholic Climate Covenant, to ask about potential next steps and consider a conversation with the legal counsel of the Archdiocese.*

### 5. Compost Workgroup Update

- a. The Compost Workgroup collected information from University Park on their composting program. Notes from conversation with Michael Beall, Public Works Director are below.
  - i. "U.P. composts, but it is a voluntary program. This program is 6 years old. The first 15 months, only 50 households participated, then 150 (not sure of the timeline), and now they have 213 households participating. They use a 5 gallon bucket, with an airtight, screw-top lid. Residents are also given this counter-top bucket when they sign up and are provided with these compostable bags (delivered personally by the Director of Public Works every 8 weeks). About a week before a scheduled bag delivery, the Director sends out an email to Residents, asking them to reply ONLY if they do NOT need more bags. He also includes the next date (8 weeks out) when the next bag distribution will take place.
  - ii. They initially purchased the 5-gallon bins from Basco, but now they purchase the 5-gallon buckets in bulk (5-12 count) from Home Depot because it's cheaper. They do still get the lid and lid attachment piece (called a "gamma seal lid") from Basco. He said the initial cost per household for the bucket, counter-top bin and bags is about \$20.
  - iii. The 5 gallon buckets start to become brittle and need replacement after about 5 years.
  - iv. Collection: U.P. collects weekly and uses one man and one truck. They use a pickup truck with a bed that has a dump lift, but he says you could do it with a regular flat-bed pickup truck if you had water-proof containers in the back. Each 5- gallon compost bucket could be dumped into those, and then emptied at the collection site. Collection for compost occurs at the same location as yard waste. In his experience, each household makes about 8 lbs of compost a week."
- b. Outstanding questions for Mt. Rainier are: Can we use the county's new facility? What are the fees? Would Public Works be able to do the pick-up?
- c. If the Green Team can get a cost estimate together by November we can put it into the Public Works budget for when Mr. Komali starts budget discussions with City Manager Miranda Braatz. The proposal can go into the November work session. A targeted, well-thought out pilot would likely get support. *The Green Team and Compost Workgroup will continue to develop a pilot proposal with costs for Compost pick-up.*

### 6. Mosquito Workgroup Update

- a. The Green Team chair has been in contact with the Tree Commission and others about mosquito control resources and dissemination, discussing the pros and cons of flyering, using the list-serv, and putting information in the message. The Green Team also noted that the PG Pool has a "Team Skeeter" that has installed mosquito traps. *The Green*

*Team will follow up with PG Pool about the traps and their early results and will look into green mosquito control materials from the County and the University of MD Extension Office for dissemination in the community.*

## **7. Updates from the Intermunicipal Bike/Ped Work Group**

- a. The Green Team chair attended the Intermunicipal Bike/Ped Workgroup on June 5<sup>th</sup> and gave an update. Sarah is happy to continue to represent Mt. Rainier at these events. The notes from the meeting are included as an Appendix to these notes.
- b. Councilmember Chesek stated that Mt. Rainier did receive BikeWays funding and is looking at how to use it. A likely use is creating sharrows on Bunker Hill to link up with the bike lane/sharrows that extend into DC. The City Manager will likely approach the Green Team about this plan in the near future.
- c. *The Green Team is discussing a possible late summer Mt. Rainier bike ride hosted by the Bike Co-Op. Another future plan is a 2020 Bike to Work Day pit stop in Mt. Rainier.*
- d. Councilmember Chesek is working on a plan for making Mt. Rainier a bikable and walkable city as part of developing the downtown core and will be discussing this more in future meetings.

## **8. Parks updates**

- a. Dueling Creek updates - Friends of Dueling Creek and Stream Team
  - i. Councilmember Chesek is in contact with Friends of Dueling Creek and Kevin from the Stream Team on a project to find ways to improve the water entering the Dueling Creek and perhaps daylighting part of it one day. The short-term plan is to improve bioretention and grow an eco-system of people interested in stormwater; the long-term plan is to daylight one of the creeks in Mt. Rainier.
  - ii. Dueling Creek is by the Public Works building, goes underground near the skate parks, and curves shortly after and is exposed to the light even though it's not technically daylighted. It is a good candidate for daylighting.
  - iii. It would be nice if we could test the water now and figure out the quality and if the improvements could positively impact the quality. This would help the City apply for other stormwater and bioretention grants and would also help us grow our own capabilities to do water testing.
  - iv. A possibility for hosting meetings on this topic is the Community Connect at Nature Center. This is a new service; if it's a community-related meeting you can fill out a form 30 days in advance and get to meet in the space with the usual fee waived. *Kevin from the Stream Team will look into securing the Community Connect meeting space at the Nature Center for a Dueling Park meeting.*
- b. 31st Street Pocket Park - Tree Commission native forest project
  - i. Barry and Gabe from the Tree Commission are interested in turning the 31<sup>st</sup> Street Pocket Park into a native forest, with an emphasis on fruiting plants. *Councilmember Chesek will coordinate a Tree Commission/Green Team meeting to make a plan, potentially in August, to meet and talk about the 31<sup>st</sup> Street Pocket Park.*

## **9. Waste Reduction Updates**

- a. Alternative recycling drop-off points
  - i. Ideas for alternative items to drop off are batteries and light bulbs. *The Green Team will follow up with Rocio and Mr. Komali to see if there could be an alternative drop-off point and time at Public Works.*
- b. Public trash cans and recycling cans
  - i. The Green Team discussed the need for recycling education and will continue to look into ideas for stickers for the recycling containers. Giving a regular/reoccurring reminder in the Message about "check the top of your can" is another idea.

- ii. For potential block-by-block outreach, the Stream Team is working on an idea to have volunteer Block Captains that address trash on their streets like a trash neighborhood watch. The first step is engaging the approximately 100 people who signed the Stream Team No Litter Left Behind pledge. The second step will be the Stream Team going door to door for litter reduction education and volunteers. *The Green Team and the Stream Team will work together to develop a "heads up" in the Message and other social media to let people know about the No Litter Left Behind campaign.*
- iii. Additional public recycling cans and bins are in the current budget. There was pushback against trash bins so there will be fewer than Public Works recommended.
- c. Kaywood Gardens Recycling update – Tabled
- d. Next Styrofoam E-Waste Event – Saturday June 15<sup>th</sup>

#### **10. PG County Gateway Arts District Overlay Zone Revision**

- a. There is a proposal to revisit animal agriculture zoning and propose rules/regulation around the way the chickens are acquired and maintained, as opposed to banning them outright which is the current state. Mt. Rainier could serve as a brain trust to the county's future decisions on it. The Green Team could help facilitate a community conversation about this topic. Another idea is to have #GreenIsLife show the pros and cons in the community of revisiting the chicken laws. *The Green Team will continue to follow the idea of revisiting backyard chicken laws in the community and discuss a community conversation for the future.*

#### **11. Grants**

- a. Maryland Department of Natural Resources Funding Available for Resilience, Restoration and Stewardship - Tabled
- b. PG Litter Reduction and Citizen Engagement Mini Grant Program - Tabled
- c. Stream Team is considering applying for grants to build litter traps/bandalongs in the DC area; Sarah is able to help review grant applications and requirements as needed.

#### **12. Outreach**

- a. The Message
  - i. The Green Team will submit the lead write-up for July (due 6/11/19) but the Message may be on hiatus.
  - ii. August (due 7/11/19)
    - 1. *Ideas include a short blurb for the Stream Team's No Litter Left Behind campaign, which Kevin will draft, and an update on the status of the city's parks.*
  - iii. Upcoming topics
    - 1. Lead (Joseph, already drafted)
    - 2. Wish-cycling
- b. #GreenIsLife Videos
  - i. On the weekend of 6/22 #GreenIsLife will be filming videos on the Stream Team and lead abatement.
  - ii. Future ideas include Wish-cycling, More Recycling Tips, Other Recycling (ewaste, etc.)
  - iii. Is there a way the Green Team can we help them boost the YouTube channel via Facebook blasts or other outreach. *Sarah will talk to Doug about promoting the #GreenIsLife videos.*
- c. Mimi proposed adding a "Question of the Month" in the Green Team Message, aimed at adults, kids or both, to increase engagement.

#### **13. Topics for a Later Date**

- a. Plastics Reduction

- b. Economic Development Fund
- c. Parks - 31st Street Park, Rogers Park
- d. Green Development Fund/Development Projects
- e. LED for Buildings
- f. Parks Plan - Fee in Lieu Of
- g. Art walk from Joe's to the elementary schools (painted crosswalks)
- h. Rain Check Rebate follow-up and blog

Upcoming Events/Dates

Next Meeting: July 8, 2019

## Appendix – Notes from the 2019-06-05 Intermunicipal Bike-Ped Work Group

- Trolley Trail Day Upcoming June 8<sup>th</sup> (<https://hycdc.org/the-arts/public-art/artways/rhode-island-avenue-trolley-trail/>)
- Bike share update
  - o Bike share is filling in Prince George's County but it is a slow process, with hold-ups at the county level
  - o The University of College Park will have its current bike share vendor, Zagster/mBike, through August 31<sup>st</sup> and after that will switch to ViyaRide. ViyaRide has dockless parking, monitored by geofencing, and offers pedal bikes, ebikes, and scooters. The group discussed areas where parking areas (defined by geofencing) may be appropriate off campus. This was based off of heat maps showing where University users current ride to.
  - o The University will need to get rid of the Zagster bikes and is interested in giving them to local groups rather than sending them to a landfill. Several possible recipients were discussed. Mount Rainier will follow up with the Mount Rainier Bike Co-Op to see if they are interested in receiving some. *Note: Followed up with the Bike Co-Op and connected them to Kacy Rohn from the City of College Park and Marta Woldu from UMD to discuss the bikes further (June 7<sup>th</sup>).*
- Status of ebikes and scooters in on PGC park trails
  - o Currently ebikes and e-scooters are not allowed on park trails, but Montgomery County is starting a pilot program where the County will issue a park directive creating an exception for these vehicles on specific trails. The County will collect data for six months.
  - o WABA will send the details of this pilot to PGC Parks and encourage PGC Parks to conduct a similar pilot.
  - o Park enforcement of bad e-transit behavior was discussed.
- Trail updates
  - o Little Paint Branch Extension is open.
  - o There is a need for municipalities to take on the long-term management, policing and upkeep of the Trolley Trail going forward. PGC Parks is willing to providing funding for certain management and maintenance costs but the municipalities should be taking on the administration of the segments that pass through their communities.
  - o The West Hyattsville Townhouses development by the metro station is ongoing and will require another detour but the trail will be repaved and widened and have lighting improved/added. Trees will be cut but PGC Parks were able to secure trail rehabilitation and lighting.
  - o The Agar Road project (Jamestown to Queens Chapel) will include bikeways, sidewalk widening and a new traffic signal, all coming from the State Highway Administration.
  - o The Allison Street Levee project will necessitate closing of the trail bridge (crossing Queens Chapel on the Northwest Branch Trail) and parts of the trail and unfortunately

- the detour may be circuitous. PGC Parks is looking at how to coordinate the detours and communicating the detours to the trail users.
- Takeaway: PGC Parks is negotiating better bike-ped infrastructure outcomes overall, even though the construction and detours can be an issue.
  - WABA gave an update of the Capital Trails Program and the long-term goal of the creation of a “bicycle beltway.” WABA has an online interactive map showing the missing pieces (<https://www.waba.org/blog/2018/08/the-capital-trails-coalitions-new-trail-network-map/>). This work is part of the Capital Trails Coalition (<http://capitaltrailscoalition.org/>). *NOTE: Is Mount Rainier a member of this?*
  - Hyattsville is funding Arrow Bicycles to install 40 bike racks and 4 repair stations in the city.
  - PGC Parks is happy to help municipalities with grant applications and can provide some support on grant applications that require matching funds. Potential grants are:
    - BikeWays ([http://www.mdot.maryland.gov/newMDOT/Planning/Bike\\_Walk/Bikeways.html](http://www.mdot.maryland.gov/newMDOT/Planning/Bike_Walk/Bikeways.html)) – Due June 14<sup>th</sup> *NOTE: Does Mount Rainier have BikeWays funding?*
    - Transportation Alternatives Program (<https://www.roads.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=144>) – Not open until 2020
  - The next meeting will be on September 4<sup>th</sup> or the following week depending on Labor Day holiday plans.